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Growing Pains in West Africa

by F. J. ERROLL, M.P.

THERE seemed little change in the railway workshops at Lagos in Nigeria when I went round them early this year as a member of the Parliamentary Delegation to British West Africa. My previous visit had taken place almost exactly eleven years before. The same wagons, the same locomotives; although, as the Oilseeds Mission Report has subsequently pointed out, these are well overdue for replacement. The whole place seemed a little smaller, and perhaps the African workmen were working a little slower, but otherwise it was proving a rather unexceptional visit until my eye caught a notice chalked up on the side of a locomotive tender:—"STRIKE MEETING—WEDNESDAY".

Over the last ten years a strong National Union of Nigerian Railwaymen has grown up. Affiliated to the Trades Union Congress of Nigeria it has led the strike movements of Nigeria. Less than two years ago the organized Nigerian workers, dissatisfied by the rising cost of living and the government's reluctance to pay increased allowances, staged a general strike, which persisted for some weeks. It finally broke up when the government promised a full and impartial inquiry into the strikers' complaints. A Commission appointed by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and led by Mr Tudor Davies arrived in Nigeria and later recommended a considerable increase in cost of living allowance (COLA) which was approved by the Colonial Office and admitted by the Nigerian Government. This major success has done much to strengthen the Trade Union movement, although the Unions are in danger of jeopardizing their position by threatening frivolous strikes. The strike meeting for Wednesday was being called to discuss the management's refusal to allow time off for the railway workers to see a local football match.

How far this movement—a new development since my previous visit—had a spontaneous origin in the brain of the African worker and how much was implanted by European officials is not easy to say. Political pressure in England by Trade Union M.P.'s and others had caused the Colonial Office to give full encouragement to the formation and development of Trade Unions in West Africa. It had of course been recognized by the

colonial government that some form of workers' organizations would be an advantage for airing grievances and discussing the establishment of fair wage rates. Accordingly Labour Officers were appointed to each West African government, whose task was to secure the growth of African Trade Unions in an orderly and efficient way. How well the British model of militant Trade Unionism was transplanted to tropical Nigeria is shown by the general strike already alluded to, and the whole episode reveals the broadmindedness of British colonial policy. What other colonizing power in the world would teach its subject folk how to organize Trade Unions, permit them to strike against the government and then after investigation agree to the justice of the strikers' claim and award increased allowances?

In Accra, capital of the Gold Coast, we saw another aspect of this policy. The municipal transport undertaking is wholly staffed by African drivers and conductors. Members of the Accra Town Council were enthusiastic about forming a Union of Transport Workers. One of them asked me how they should go about it. I asked if the workers wanted a Union. "That does not matter", came the reply, "the councillors want the workers to have one."

This councillor was not a European official but an African trader. He was illustrating a tendency all too common in the coastal regions of West Africa today. There is a danger in our educating the African to be like ourselves in all respects; to bring him up like a performing animal, copying all our institutions and customs but not understanding them. This is a serious matter, affecting as it does the whole psychological development of the rapidly maturing West African. Not unnaturally he desires to copy and emulate the customs and achievements of his white rulers. One native chief invited the delegation to a reception at which iced champagne was served and the servants were dressed in the same page-boy style as those at the Chief Commissioner's house. Another, in Nigeria, invited me to lunch and served courses and wines in a manner and sequence indistinguishable from that at the Residency. Yet not far away two days later we found on the roadside a mutilated victim of a Leopard murder.



The primitive and ferocious instincts are there still, and frequently come to the surface in a spirit of impotent and sullen discontent. I am sure that many educated West Africans do not feel happy in their new rôle of copying the manners and technique of the white man, and a large part of their nature remains thwarted and frustrated on this account. These feelings find partial expression in the vitriolic outpourings of the native newspapers, another development which came as a surprise on my second visit. In 1936 the native papers were nothing more than local news-sheets, with a few columns of innocuous gossip. At Ibadan in Nigeria, I was to be sharply reminded that times had changed. On opening the *Southern Nigeria Defender*, I found a leading article roundly condemning a criticism I had made previously in Parliament of two Nigerian individuals: "Were it not that Africans are always hospitable to strangers I should order Colonel Erroll to be arrested straight away and sent to the concentration camp. . . . I am warning Colonel Erroll to be very careful in future." At a subsequent press conference during the trip I praised the Nigerian Government and welcomed the advent of the new Richards Constitution which creates three new native assemblies and gives increased powers to the Africans themselves. This led to the *West African Pilot* saying:

Why should we take Colonel Erroll seriously when he told the Ibadan interviewers that Nigeria has reason to be grateful for her achievements under the auspices of the British Government? Why should we not look with disdain on the statement that Nigeria, on the top of other places, feeds and clothes better? This is a typical example of what opinion certain Parliamentary Members entertain about the people of Nigeria. Colonel Erroll would have escaped, as others had done, only to explode his accumulated but absolutely wrong impressions and views about Nigeria, when he arrives in England. But the Nigerian interviewers at Ibadan got him off his balance by bursting out what he had in his mind. He lauded the Richards regime!

Day in, day out, the principal Nigerian newspapers are criticizing and slanging the government, the officials, white men in general, and individual traders in particular. This campaign is led by the Zik Press, a chain of newspapers, run by a smooth-voiced quiet-mannered man called Azikiwe, who has a considerable following in Southern Nigeria. To the literate African white man's government is little better than a benevolent dictatorship. He can have little say in affairs. The six-monthly meetings of Legislative

Council are too remote to satisfy his political yearnings, and so the only channel open to him is criticism—useless, destructive criticism, as pointless and anti-social as the Leopard murders. The government is reluctant to do anything which might be regarded as restricting the 'freedom of the press', but whether a developing child should be accorded freedom to destroy his better nature is questionable.

For the African, primitive or educated, undoubtedly has some very fine qualities in his nature, and nowhere has this been more clearly shown than in the returning African ex-service man. Almost without exception these men have come back much improved by what they learnt in the army and by their contacts with a larger world. At village palavers organized in honour of the delegation I often asked if the ex-soldiers in the village were settling down well. Invariably the reply was favourable, and several veterans of the Burma campaign would step forward to confirm what was said on their behalf. Army life improved their physique; semi-European food gave them wider but not necessarily

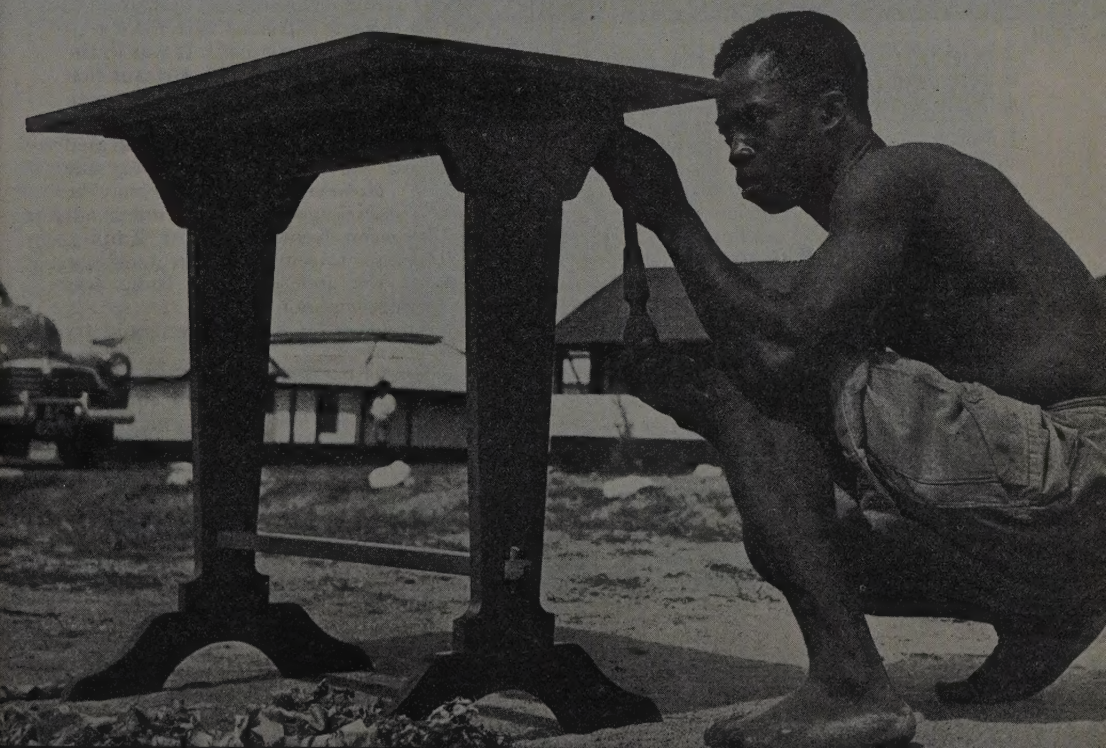
improved tastes, which are now a matter of embarrassment for rationing officers whose stocks of English canned foods are sufficient only for the European population; and a generous gratuity enabled them to buy the dowry of cattle necessary to obtain a good wife. How long the benefits of service life will remain it is hard to say, but I hope that some official encouragement will be given to a proposal for setting up some form of simple Territorial Army Service, for those ex-service men who would like a holiday every other year and a chance to renew old wartime friendships.

Of course the picture has its darker sides. In one district we saw a queue of ex-service men waiting to ask the District Commissioner for jobs. There was plenty of work on the farms and in the villages but these lads wanted something better: many hoped to become lorry drivers, a trade they had learnt in the army. But there are not lorries enough in West Africa to provide jobs for all the ex-army drivers.

In one small native police station in Nigeria

West Africa's economic development has long passed the merely agricultural stage and local workers are skilled in many arts. Not only is the excellent native timber largely exported: it is manufactured by African craftsmen, who have participated in a scheme organized through the Gold Coast timber trade by making furniture, such as the table shown below, for bombed-out families in Britain

Crown Copy





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The ideas of educated Africans now find their way into print with as much explosive force as in Renaissance Europe. The native newspapers are a natural outlet for 'divine' discontent

I found a former private under arrest. He still wore most of his uniform, including the divisional signs of the West African division which I had seen in Burma less than two years previously. He could not find a job and had stolen a length of cloth from a neighbour. He was due to go before the court that morning. A few misfits there are bound to be; the remarkable thing is that there have been so few.

Up country the system of Indirect Rule continues to make steady if somewhat slow progress. By this system the colonial government delegates authority to native councils and chiefs, leaving them free to act in accordance with tribal customs and to collect taxes, but subject to the supervision of the local British District Officer. Local welfare thus depends a good deal on the energy and efficiency of the individual Native Authorities.

In most cases these are democratically elected, but in backward areas the capacity of those coming forward for election may be such that the council or authority can only make slow progress. I sometimes wonder if the ex-service man will be content to accept its placid deliberative decisions, often only reached through the active intervention of the District Officer. Maybe he will inject new energy into a system that now has many critics on account of both its tardiness and its high administrative costs. (A Native Authority is doing well if not more than 50 per cent of its revenue is absorbed in tax collection, office expenses and payments to chiefs.) More likely the African ex-soldier will "return to bush". Under-nourishment, boredom, and the absence of the stimulating varied life of the army, will reduce him to the happy-go-lucky peasant farmer that he always was.

It is to the coastal towns that one must look for the most interesting racial developments. Continued education, successful trading, and frequent contacts with Europeans, make the literate Africans extremely sensitive to progress. It was in the coastal towns that Africans first met the American service men who came during the war. It

is in the coastal towns too that the educated Africans ask for more authority to rule themselves. However critical they may be of their colonial governments, none advocated secession from the British Empire, all were anxious to remain within it. None referred to the independence India was about to receive, nor seemed to see in India's troubles an example they should try to avoid.

As so often with a newly developing people, performance does not march with ambition. Young Africans are not training themselves for administrative posts in the numbers required. Of the ninety Gold Coast students on overseas scholarships at the beginning of 1947, seventy-six were taking law, while only fourteen were studying engineering, medicine and specialist subjects. There is much agitation for the appointment of African District



F. J. Erroll

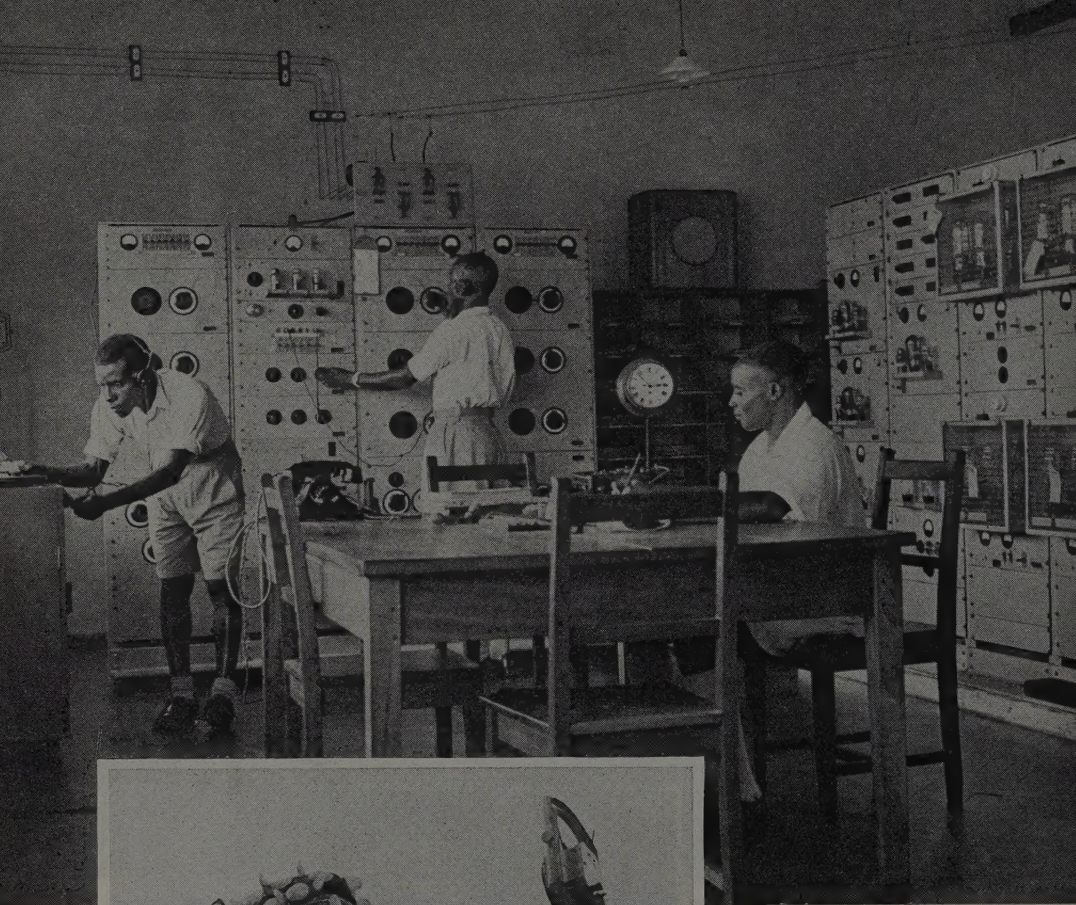


F. J. Erroll



Margot Lubinski

Starting usually in primitive surroundings, the West African's road to adjustment with the modern world lies through the school. From it emerges not only the exceptionally gifted boy who may become a professional or business man but also, in increasing numbers, the apprentice artisan or transport worker: that is to say, the potential leader of an African Trade Union. (Above, left) A mother outside her home, Bolgatanga, Gold Coast. (Above, right) Eyes on teacher: school class in progress, Njala, Sierra Leone. (Right) Eyes on the passenger: a full-fledged 'bus conductor in Accra, Gold Coast



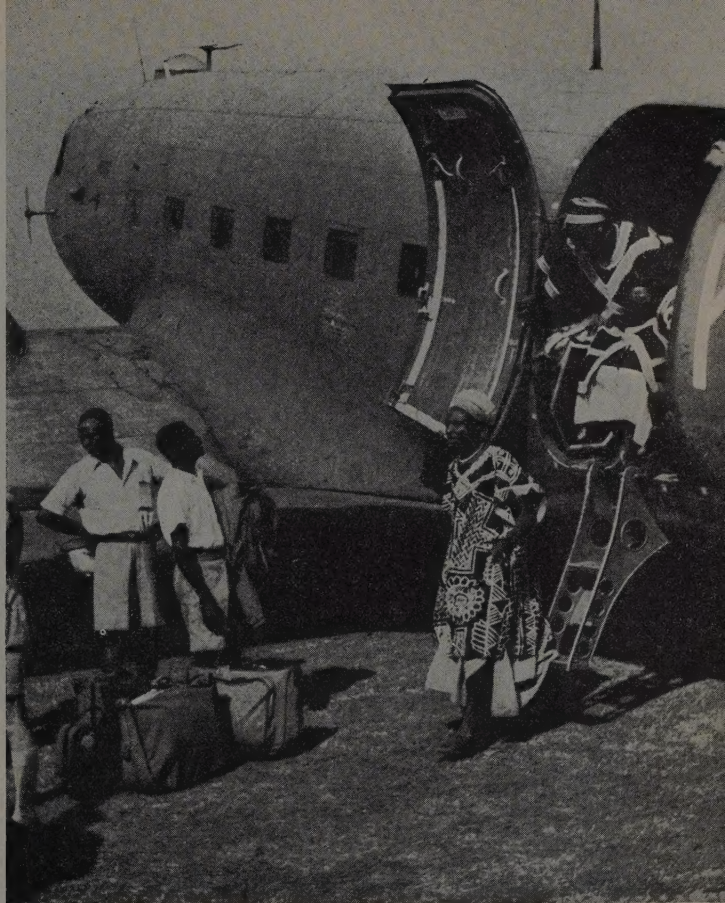
Regional Information Office, Gold Coast



Regional Information Office, Gold Coast

Broadcasting is already an important channel of information in West Africa, being capable of as much good use or abuse as elsewhere. Run (with British assistance) by Africans for Africans, it can play its part in enlivening the system of Indirect Rule, now criticized as a brake on rapid progress. (Left) The Asantehene (Chief of Ashanti) speaking at a durbar at Kumasi, Gold Coast

The mechanical devices of modern civilization are becoming familiar to all West Africans, beginning with the tribal chiefs. It remains for a generation to grow up which is capable of turning them to sober and profitable account



Officers, but few candidates are of the calibre required. As in India, a successful African must support his family and numerous relations. He is also expected to show preference to his friends. His relations weigh him down with financial burdens, and his friends offer commissions for services rendered. How many Africans can resist the temptation? A start has been made in Nigeria with an Oxford graduate of exceptionally fine character, but he has had to be sent to a remote district far from relations and tribal friends. It is more than probable that natives in any one district would prefer to be administered by a white man than by a 'foreign' African who perhaps could not even speak their tribal language.

In the sphere of voluntary service on municipal councils and provincial assemblies it is possible to draw on the services of Africans who have distinguished themselves in their own professions or businesses; this is being done to an increasing extent, and is becoming

of greater importance now that the Legislative Councils of Nigeria and the Gold Coast have both got unofficial majorities. The Town Council at Freetown was a disappointment to us. Because the Governor retained the right to approve all expenditure and to confirm all appointments to senior positions in the municipality the African Council said they were powerless, and preferred to do nothing except complain instead of showing they were really competent and thus perhaps succeeding in getting the offending restrictions removed. Apart from this rather unhappy example there is, I think, a good reserve of talent on the coast for municipal and state councils. The desire to serve the community without the expectation of immediate financial reward is only just beginning to show itself, but it is there and may grow in time. It is from the sons and grandsons of these men, slowly educated into a tradition of public service, that we may hope to see the new rulers of British West Africa emerge.

F. J. Er...

The Pembrokeshire National Park

by JULIAN HUXLEY and R. M. LOCKLEY

Dr Julian Huxley served on the Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Arthur Hobhouse, appointed by the "caretaker government" in July 1945 to recommend which areas of England and Wales should be reserved as National Parks. In describing one of the most interesting areas selected he is joined by Mr Lockley, whose outstanding work as a naturalist in Pembrokeshire is widely known

THE selection of Pembrokeshire as the site of one of the batch of twelve National Parks proposed for England and Wales by the Hobhouse Committee is of some special interest. For the Pembrokeshire National Park will be the first coastal national park in the world—the first area to be selected as a park primarily for the wild beauty of a narrow coastal strip. However, it will not be exclusively coastal. In the north of the county the Park boundaries will extend some miles inland to cover the rolling mountains and wooded valleys and rushing streams of the Prescelly range; and in the south it will take in the entire estuary of Milford Haven, to the tidal limits far inland up the wood- and meadow-fringed branches of the two Cleddaus.

The average man will probably have acquired his idea of national parks from the famous existing National Parks of Canada, the United States, South Africa and the Belgian Congo. He may not perhaps realize that the National Parks of England must necessarily be of a very different form. National Parks in Africa serve primarily as gigantic nature reserves, to safeguard the geology, the landscape, the flora and the fauna of the region. But, since nature there is often very striking or interesting—witness the Parc National Albert with its great lakes and forested volcanic mountain; or the Kruger National Park with its almost unique stock of big game—people will want to come to enjoy the beauty and interest; so visitors are admitted, though under more or less strict controls.

In the United States, on the other hand, the main purpose

is to preserve areas of wild country for public enjoyment. The conservation of wild life in them is a secondary aim, carried out with scientific purpose by a special government agency. Accordingly the fullest provision of hostels, camp sites, roads, trails and other facilities is made, and the maximum number of visitors encouraged.

In both continents there is abundance of almost uninhabited and virgin country, without either agricultural development or urban settlement. As a result the National Parks can be really large (the Yellowstone, for instance, has an area of 3450 square miles), and they can be owned and managed by the government, without the complications of a settled local population with its life to live.





All Kodachromes, except two, by Julian Huxley

The Pembrokeshire National Park is to include the entire estuary of Milford Haven, a drowned river valley. On its upper reaches, many miles from the open sea, the fields and trees come down to the very edge of the salt water. Yachtsman and birdwatcher alike can enjoy these secluded inlets

England, on the other hand, is too small and too densely populated for this. Except for a few moors, fens, islands and mountain tops all rural land in Britain is in use for agricultural, forestry or sporting purposes. Its National Parks to be really large cannot lack human settlement and development. Both the Lake District and Snowdonia, for instance, are the site of a well-developed if rather specialized agriculture, as well as of other types of settlement. No attempt would be made within a Park to interfere with these rural activities, though public right of access will have to be defined, and the purely sporting side may have to be modified. National ownership is not contemplated, though the N.P.A. (National Parks Authority) would be empowered to control all development. This control would be exercised so as to prevent unsightly or undesirable development, from general industrialization to the ugly design of a single house, and to preserve and foster the agriculture and other purely rural industries so that they remained a feature of the area. Thus the usual country life would go on, and would in fact be considerably benefited by the inflow of visitors, since many farms and cot-

tages would be able to take paying guests.

With the full establishment and growing popularity of the Park, however, provision would have to be made for larger numbers of visitors. This might in part be accomplished by converting into hostels and guest-houses some of the many old country houses and manors which have now become too expensive to run privately and are beginning to decay and fall in ruins. But new hostels and guest-houses will also be necessary, and these would be carefully designed and sited to harmonize with their environment. These accommodation centres, both converted and new, could be managed by non-profit-making societies or by private enterprise, but if their rates are to be within reach of the average wage-earner, it may be necessary to write off the capital cost of new building or conversion by a grant from the N.P.A.

The provision of adequate footpaths, especially in the enclosed parts of the Park, is of the greatest importance, not less to the local farmers who are haunted by visions of hordes of visitors trampling crops, leaving gates open, breaking down hedges, and frightening stock, than to the visitors who want easy access to



Pembrokeshire, warmed by the Atlantic, abounds in wild flowering shrubs. Where gorse grows near the sea, as here on Dinas Head, it tends to form dense cushions, often closely mixed with heather

the open 'rambling land' and the best scenery. And of course in a coastal park there must be a good path along the whole edge of the shore, by cliff, bay, dune, beach and estuary. The construction and maintenance of these paths would be the responsibility of the N.P.A. (with provision for compulsory purchase and compensation in respect of any land acquired).

The natural history of National Parks calls for special treatment. One of the chief attractions of unspoilt nature is its wild life. The impression made by striking scenery is powerfully enhanced by abundance of striking plants or animals, be they rare or common.

Thus within the Pembrokeshire National Park it will be especially essential to preserve the characteristic cliff and island flora and fauna, with their vernal squills and bluebells, their sea-pinks and sea-campion, and their occasional patches of royal fern; their ravens, choughs, rock-pipits and peregrines, their gulls, auks, petrels, shearwaters, guillemots, oyster-catchers, cormorants and gannets. Equally characteristic are the sheets of sea-lavender along the saltings, the gorse and heather, often intermingled, of the hill slopes; the buzzards and kestrels, the dippers and grey wagtails, the curlews and redshanks, of the various other habitats.

To accomplish this, the strict enforcement

of general laws and regulations concerning wild life, and of any special regulations required in the Park, will in the first place be necessary. Then various areas should be set aside as National Park Reserves, to act as breeding reservoirs for species that might otherwise be in danger. And areas with species, or communities of species, of special scientific interest (like the Pembrokeshire bird islands) should be created National Nature Reserves, and acquired and managed by the nation. Within nature reserves, of course, public access may have to be restricted, though visits by limited numbers, if necessary accompanied by a warden, should always be allowed.

The geology of Pembrokeshire is abundantly exposed in crag and tor and cliff. There is great variety of igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks, including a small coal-seam. The tilting and cleavage and folding of rock layers is very fine, for instance in the cliffs between Fishguard and Moylgrove, and near St Ann's Head.

The country is also rich in prehistoric remains. Dolmen and cromlech and stone circle are found numerous, especially in the mountainous north. These ancient monuments and standing stones are almost profuse on Mynydd Prescelly (the Prescelly Moun-



John Buxton

The secluded islands off the Pembrokeshire coast afford safe breeding-places to interesting species of birds. On Grassholm there is the only Welsh gannetry, comprising some 6000 pairs of gannets



R. M. Lockley

The Atlantic seal breeds all round the rocky coasts of Pembrokeshire, in caves or little bays inaccessible from above. The young seals at first are white, changing coat at about two weeks old



Coast scenes in west and north Pembrokeshire. (Above) The sweep of St Bride's Bay from near Martinshaven. (Opposite) The little cove of Aberfforest near Dinas Head, with Pen Morfa beyond

tains), which must have been of some special sacredness, since it was from a site on their eastern side that the 'blue stones' of Stonehenge's inner ring were obtained—though it is not yet clear how the great stones were transported to Salisbury Plain.

Throughout Roman and Norse occupation the country people remained and spoke Welsh, but the Normans (who created the earldom of Pembroke) imported Flemish peasants to work the land, as a result of which the Welsh language died out in the southern half of Pembrokeshire. North Pembrokeshire, however, defied the foreigners; the line of castles (from Roch in the west through Llawhaden, Narberth and Winston) built by the Normans to protect their lands from the Welshmen's sallies, still roughly marks the division between the Welsh-speaking northmen and the English-speaking southmen of Pembrokeshire today.

North of this line you are in a land of hills and low bare rolling mountains. It is not a fertile country, but it supports a sturdy Welsh-speaking peasantry dispersed in small farms where the labour is usually supplied by the family. The rainfall is heavy, and the soil and climate, except along the drier coast strip, is better suited to grazing, both of cattle and sheep, than to the arable farming imposed

during the war. It was a happy plan to include the wildest part of this northern region of the county in the National Park, since it combines so much of archaeological and historical interest with a rare natural beauty that is particularly accessible by reason of the numerous small lanes and byways which connect the many open moors, commons and mountain slopes. The landscape has not the grandeur of Snowdonia, but it has a distinct character of its own which can perhaps best be described as "satisfying".

This Prescelly sector contains the entire basins of two beautiful small rivers, the Nevern and the Gwayne, which tumble down to the sea, one to the east, the other to the west, of the bold peninsula of Dinas Head. They pass through narrow green valleys whose steep sides are clothed with native oak, ash and sycamore. Pools and little waterfalls adorn their wild and overgrown upper reaches where there is scarcely a house to be found. Buzzards, dippers and grey wagtails find a sanctuary undisturbed by man.

So much in few words for the region of the Prescelly Mountains, from whose highest point, Foel Cwmcerwyn, exactly one-third of a mile high, you may see on a clear day the Wicklow Hills of Ireland, Snowdon and Bardsey Island and the Llyn peninsula of



At one part of Aberfforest cove the rocks are nearly vertical, forming overhangs where house-martins breed as they bred centuries before man's dwelling enlarged the range of their breeding-sites

Caernarvonshire, Lundy Island and the Devon coast, as well as almost the whole of Pembrokeshire and its islands spread like a map below your feet. The Prescelly range is not enclosed; the grazing rights are free to all who hold land in farms contiguous to the mountain.

To the north the National Park once more approximates to a coastal strip, stretching up to the estuary of the Teifi at Cardigan. Between Cardigan and Newport the eight-mile stretch of coast is almost completely cliff-bound, unspoilt, unvisited and almost unknown. Here a planned footpath would help to make accessible what can at present only be appreciated from a boat: the little pebble beaches, the caves, peninsulas, insulated rocks, and the changing geological structure of the steep slate cliffs. The many kinds of beautiful and interesting wild flowers include the large-flowered Perennial Centaury, *Erythraea portensis*, a plant of South-Western Europe which, strange to say, is found nowhere else in Britain. Sea birds, ravens, buzzards and kestrels find secure nesting-places in the cliffs, and Atlantic seals breed in the many caves.

Newport is a country shopping centre and holiday resort, having excellent sands and cliff and mountain walks. Between Newport and Fishguard there are low cliffs and sand and pebble beaches. The so-called Island of

Dinas is a peninsula with an isthmus which was once part of the bed of a river, now cut off by erosion of either end and raised a few feet above the level of the sea. The green headland provides a superb view. On the north, it falls almost sheer 460 feet to the sea.

West of Fishguard—an ill-planned and rather ugly town upon a beautiful site—the rocky promontory of Pen Caer, with Strumble Head as its northernmost point, is unspoilt and full of fine and pleasing views, with small neat whitewashed farms sprinkling its seaward slopes. Stretching westwards from Pwll Deri is a ridge of the same hard rock which forms the peaks of Pen Caer. This provides one of the finest bits of coast scenery in Britain, the great cliff in the foreground enhanced by the distant view of the promontory of St David's and its attendant islands beyond. From Pen Caer to St David's the coast alternates between high cliffs and bays, some sand, some shingle, facing north-west, open to the Atlantic storms, a windswept and wild prospect, unspoilt and very beautiful on a fine summer day. The little fishing havens of Abercastle and Porth Gain provide the only shelter for small boats. A coastal path here would give access to the delectable views and charming little creeks and bays of this indented shore.

At St David's the patron saint of Wales was



Along the southward-facing coast between Linney Head and Tenby the sea has cut into a level table-land, forming low cliffs and isolated stacks. One such stack may be discerned in the middle distance. Another, not here shown, is the famous Elegug Stack, crowded with 'elegugs' or guillemots

born in the year A.D. 460. He lived there for most of his life. His fame drew many to visit this remote spot and after his death his shrine was frequented by a numerous succession of pilgrims. The casket containing his remains lies in the cathedral which was founded in 1180 to commemorate his saintly life. At one time St David's was quite a large market town, centring round the great ecclesiastical establishment of the cathedral, the lofty and large episcopal palace, the college, and the offices and homes of the dignitaries and clergy.

Today St David's is but a very small place, a 'village-city'. Its bishop lives nearer the centre of his see, at Carmarthen, while jackdaws are the principal inhabitants of the ruins of the great bishop's palace. The visitor will find a pleasant peace in the valley where the cathedral is hid, beside the charming brook Alan. Good roads and paths radiate from St David's in the direction of the fine headlands and sandy bays which encompass it to the north, west and south.

Solva is a few miles distant along the northern arm of St Bride's Bay and like St David's has holiday accommodation. Several farms and part of the coast in this district are now protected by covenants with the National

Trust, as are parts of the coast along the southern arm of St Bride's Bay.

At the north end of this wide bay lies Ramsey Island and at the south are Skokholm, Skomer and Grassholm. These three islands between them form a wonderful group sanctuary for sea-birds. Grassholm has the only gannetry in England and Wales, a thriving and increasing colony at present numbering 12,000 adult gannets. Skokholm and Skomer have huge populations of shearwaters and puffins. Skokholm is also noted for its storm-petrels; for the fine herd of Soay sheep, the most primitive and moufflon-like of all domestic breeds, which has been acclimatized on it; and for the bird-ringing work carried out there before the war, and now revived again. All the islands have large numbers of the commoner sea-birds on their cliffs: great and lesser black-backed and herring gulls, kittiwakes, razorbills, guillemots and oyster-catchers; and here too Atlantic seals breed on beaches and in caves. Skokholm, Skomer and Ramsey each have single farm-houses upon them; it is essential that they continue to remain as they are, 'undeveloped', within the Park. Grassholm, Skokholm and Skomer are listed as a National Nature Reserve in the report of

the National Parks Committee. At present a limited number of students and amateur naturalists are permitted to visit these islands under regulations set up by the West Wales Field Society, which has a large membership and has undertaken much useful scientific and conservation work in the region.

The last part of the coastal park stretches along the most southerly part of Pembrokeshire, between Angle and Linney Head in the west and Tenby in the east. Viewed from the sea this coast appears as the edge of a level tableland, never above two hundred and never below one hundred feet high. Closer inspection shows it to consist principally of sheer cliffs, harbourless and much worn by the sea. Geologically it is chiefly carboniferous limestone alternating with Old Red Sandstone, and is varied with caves, stacks, natural arches, swallow-holes and blow-holes. Here again the fauna and flora are rich and unspoilt. In spring, the grass is dusted with the powder-blue of squills, and the cliffs and stacks are filled with nesting gulls, guillemots, razor-bills, puffins and kittiwakes. The fulmar petrel, in its steady invasion of the British coasts, has settled on the ledges and may soon

be breeding. Peregrine falcons, ravens and buzzards occupy the abundant territories suited to their needs. Between St Gowan's Head and Flimston Bay a broad cliff track exists which might be a model for a future coastal path.

Other features of special interest are the stacks, tall isolated pinnacles of limestone, only a few yards distant from the mainland cliff, their tops literally covered with nesting guillemots (whose Welsh name is *elegug*); the Bosherton fish-ponds with their water-lilies; Manorbier Castle, and, just outside the Park, Caldy Island with its monastery. This coast has no undesirable building upon it except at Freshwater East, and there the ugly confusion of huts and bungalows could readily be replanned as an attractive settlement.

Manorbier Castle lies in a charming sequestered valley giving way to the sea over sandhills filled with yellow horned poppies, sea holly and sand convulvulus. Here was born Gerald the Welshman (*Giraldus Cambrensis*), chronicler and earliest British tourist, who wrote a very exact description of the neighbourhood seven hundred years ago. It was then a fine model of a Norman knight's



The low cliffs near Linney Head at the south-west tip of Pembrokeshire. The limestone here lends itself to the formation of swallow-holes inland, of sea-caves, and of natural arches such as this



Manorbier Castle, commanding the coast at the southern extremity of the chain of castles built by the Normans to divide "Little England beyond Wales" from the Welsh sector of Pembrokeshire. Manorbier was the home of Giraldus Cambrensis, the 12th-13th century chronicler and travel-writer

residence, complete with church, mill, feudal cottages, fish-ponds, park and woods. Part of the castle is still lived in.

The coastal boundary of the Pembrokeshire National Park ends on the warm red sandstone cliffs east of Lydstep Haven, opposite Caldy Island. A short distance inland is Lamphey Palace, now a beautiful ruin with fine workmanship in the mouldings and arches. It was once the favourite residence of the early Bishops of St David's, who found the south of the county, with its plentiful manors and castles, more hospitable and convivial than the rude surroundings of the cathedral in the north. The castles at Manorbier, Pembroke, Carew, Upton and Tenby were all within a short ride of Lamphey.

The Pembrokeshire National Park will not be typical. The purpose set forth in the Hobhouse Report is to make available for the enjoyment of the nation a reasonable amount of the more open parts of England and Wales. While beauty of landscape had to be one criterion of choice, large size of unenclosed country another, and nearness to large centres

of population a third, attention had also to be given to including as great a variety of scenery as possible. Thus, in the twelve areas named as the first twelve National Parks, only two—in Pembroke and Cornwall—are mainly coastal. Of the others, five are mountainous, some primarily so (like Snowdonia and the Lake District), others with lesser or greater admixture of moor and valley and lowland—the Peak, the Pennines and the Brecon Beacons area. Three are moorland—Dartmoor, Exmoor and the Yorkshire moors; one is downland—the South Downs Park; and one is aquatic—the Broads.

Even if Pembrokeshire shares with Cornwall the character of a coastal park, it is very different from its partner. For one thing, it differs markedly in the character of its coast; for another, it possesses the unique combination of cliffty coast, estuary and mountain-moor. Its geology and natural history, its archaeology and history are also quite different. And it is wonderfully unspoilt. It should take a high place among the National Parks of Britain.



J. Allan Cash

Lower Town, near Fishguard. Beyond it rise the Prescelly Mountains, included in the proposed National Park

The Island of the Rose

by LAURENCE DURRELL

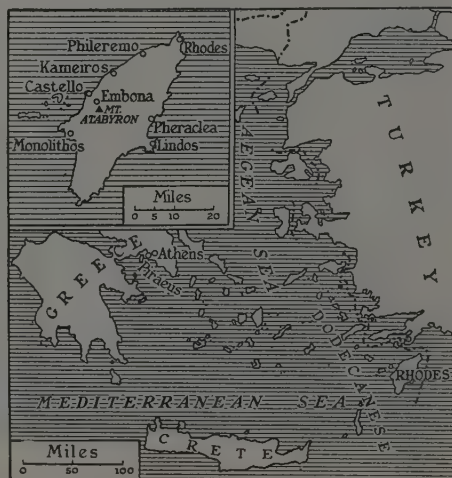
If you should have the luck to approach it, as perhaps one should, through the soft mist of a June nightfall, you would undoubtedly imagine it some great sea-animal asleep on the water. The eastern spit of sand upon which both the ancient and the modern town were built shelves slowly down into the channel from the slopes of Monte Smith, so called because Sir Sidney Smith, the conqueror of Napoleon at Acre, once set up his battle headquarters here. This would constitute the hump of your whale. Eastward loom the weather-worn Carian mountains, casting shadows so dense that the sea is stained saffron by the last rays of the sinking sun. Nestling in the natural amphitheatre where once stood the dazzling buildings and temples of the ancient town, the Crusader fortress with its encircling walls and crumbling turrets looks for all the world like a town in pen and ink, situated upon the margins of some illuminated manuscript: a mediaeval dream of an island fortress called Rhodes which the mist has invented for you, and which will dissolve as you enter the tiny harbour of Mandraccio to anchor under the fort of St Nicholas where once, it is suggested, the famous Colossus stood.

To the traveller familiar with the Rhodes of pre-war years much will seem different; yet the mediaeval town may still be considered one of the best-preserved monuments to the architecture of the Middle Ages extant in Europe. The walls have escaped save for one large breach. An extensive area of the Jewish quarter, however, has disappeared into a heap of rubble and plaster. Of the pre-war Jewish community, which numbered three thousand souls, only some thirty have managed to survive the rigours of the concentration camp and find their way back to the desolate Hebraica. A few of the smaller treasures have disappeared, but in the main the Italians succeeded in storing the contents of their museums safely; and though seriously bombarded more than once Rhodes suffered, as it were, little more than contemporary damage. Her Middle Ages remains with all its sombre beauty. And it is for this, no less than for her landscape, that the traveller of the future will brave the sea-journey from Piraeus or Alexandria.

The history of Rhodes presents a picture so highly coloured and so packed with detail that

it would be a daring thing to attempt to compress it within the confines of so short a study as this must be; yet the visitor is, so to speak, always within range of its beckonings. One cannot escape it. Each walk through the old town will throw up historical reminiscences so rich in their content that one is forced to halt, to speculate, to imagine. Hard by the ugly modern cinema bequeathed to the Rhodians by their last Governor, the traces of Hellenic wall will remind one that somewhere here Caesar and Pompey struggled under Rhodian rhetoricians for mastery over the art of speech-making. Here the exiled Tiberius, in his short cloak, walked among the temples, happy to have been granted Rhodes as a place of exile. Strolling beside the mirror-calm waters of Mandraccio harbour, in which one can see the little fort of St Nicholas reflected, who can help trying to imagine the Colossus of Rhodes which earned, by its prodigious size, a place in the catalogue of the Wonders? If, then, these notes are to be of service to the visitors of the future they should surely touch and illuminate those parts of Rhodian history which lie, so to speak, outside the covers of books, embodied in a building or a legend whose reference is contemporary and immediate. How much of the orthodox chronology does the traveller of today need to enjoy this lovely and mysterious island? Let us be bold.

Before Rhodes came into being, the power





All photographs from the Author

Looking down towards the sea off the west coast of Rhodes from the pine-clad hillock above the ancient town of Kameiros (Homer's "golden Kameiros") with its restored plinth and excavated terraces

of the island was vested in three ancient cities—Lindos, Kameiros and Ialysos (mod. Phileremo). No one can claim to know Rhodes who has not visited them, for they are still there today: Lindos blazing upon its stony promontory, Kameiros tucked into the limestone hollows of the landscape like a letter into an envelope, and Phileremo stately and remote among its nursery pines. Each has its peculiar flavour, its peculiar evocations; though all are different, one cannot but describe them as evoking something common to the broad placid tone of the island as a whole. They are different features of the same lovely face.

From the Lindean acropolis, where once the goddess Athena accepted the flameless sacrifices of the ancients, one can stare down a sheer five hundred feet at the summer sea, motionless now and drowsy. It is like staring into the lens of a peacock's eye enormously

magnified. Eastward lies the landlocked harbour with the little stone igloo which is today known as the tomb of the philosopher Cleobulus, one of the Seven Wise Men of the ancient world. In the summer sunshine the whitewashed houses of the town and the steep walls of the acropolis blaze like a diamond.

Cross to the opposite side of the island and see Kameiros. Here the archaeologist's spade has exposed the dazzling slender columns and walls of the Hellenic town. It lies in the honey-gold afternoon light, listening to the melodious ringing of water in its own deep cisterns. The light has a peculiar density and weight, as if the blue sea had stained it with some of its own troubled dyes. The amphitheatre is littered with chipped inscriptions. One can make out the names of some of the city fathers: Solon, Aristides, Aristomachos.

Phileremo lies inland, behind the modern village of Trianda. Standing on its now

desolate and empty acropolis, one can look out towards the sea across the delightful green countryside that Timocreon knew as a child. From the inner terraces the ground slopes clear away to Maritza, where the gutted modern Italian aerodrome lies. Philereino is within walking distance of the modern town.

At some time before 408 B.C. disaster overtook the three ancient cities. A great earthquake tore them to pieces. It was then that the inhabitants decided to move eastward and found a joint town which would offer them safety against the hazards of nature. The flat-ended promontory may have suggested a building-site which would prove earthquake-proof. At all events Grecian Rhodes was built in 408. It was perhaps the earliest example of over-all town-planning, for it was designed by the famous Hippodamus who was responsible for the harbour of ancient Piraeus. The city that he created was, by all accounts, staggering in its simplicity and beauty. So selective a judge as Strabo himself preferred it even to Alexandria and Rome. Its length is given as eighty stades, and its inhabitants numbered some 200,000. The carefully grouped buildings and temples ran round the semicircle of the natural amphitheatre, leading down to the three harbours.

At their back, on the little hillock today known as Monte Smith, stood a temple and acropolis encircled by a sacred wood. Pliny states that the town was decorated by some 3000 lovely statues of which 100 were colossi.

What remains today? Apart from the ancient stadium where the flocks of goats still idly browse, scarcely anything, to remind one of Rhodes' ancient splendour. On the crown of Monte Smith a few emplacements cut in the rock; towards Simbuli on the western side of the town, some shallow graves. In the centre of the old walled town one stumbles upon some broken drums belonging to an unknown temple. Hard by the Gate of St Paul a few stone ramps remain to recall the famous Rhodian shipyards which turned out those marvellous triremes. Everything else has been swallowed in the slow succession of earthquakes which began some fifty years after the setting up of the great sun-god, the statue to Helios which we know as the Colossus. Today as one stands above the little theatre which is let into the walls of the stadium and looks down the softly inclining planes of orchard and meadow, it is the mediaeval town alone that one sees: the wind-

Lindos, a Rhodian port famous in ancient times. The Crusader castle which tops its hill contains the remains of the Hellenic acropolis where Athena was worshipped and where Pindar's ode upon Diogenes was dedicated. Cleobulus, one of the Seven Wise Men of antiquity, was born and ruled here





Some houses in Lindos date back to the time of the Knights of Rhodes and are still in excellent repair. This old Greek woman lives in one with her three grandchildren, but only the youngest would face a camera, which suggests the Evil Eye to Greek peasants. The mouldings of doors and windows are of the best Crusader period



(Above) Bombs dropped by the R.A.F. accounted for some of the damage done to the Castle of the Knights, Rhodes, which was completely rebuilt by the Italians and used as a headquarters during the war. The modern town lies beyond, while the hills of Turkey rise in the distance over the channel.

Every year Orthodox Greeks celebrate Independence Day and commemorate the arrival of British troops in Rhodes. (Left) The Vicar of Rhodes pronounces a blessing upon the town from its main square. In the background are modern administrative buildings previously used by the Italians.

mills softly turning against the sky, the great buttresses of the Crusader outworks—and the slender minatory fingers of the mosques which finally triumphed over it all. It is the Rhodes that Richard the Lionheart saw in 1191, when his fleet put into the harbour for a ten-day spell, *en route* for the shores of Cyprus.

But what of the more recent history of Rhodes? For three hundred years the island endured the kindly but negligent rule of the Ottoman Turks. Yet it says something for the tenacious nationalism of the Greeks that they retained, and retain to this day, their distinction of tongue, creed and costume. Throughout the centuries the vague and shifting shape of a possible Union remained with them—a Union which today has become fact and not fancy. Today there are some 40,000 Greeks on Rhodes and some 6000 Turks; though these figures will be altered when all the refugees have returned, the proportions will still be representative. Greek island culture remains predominant throughout the Dodecanese.

In 1912 the Italians annexed Rhodes, together with some fourteen other islands of the group, and for a while the island remained merely a political counter for the Great Powers to bargain with. As late as 1923, however, an Italian governor of the island (more or less exiled there for his republican sympathies) saw its possibilities as a tourist resort, and started restorations side by side with modern developments. The island was encircled with some 150 kilometres of first-class motor-road which is today intact. Extensive reforestation was begun to check the soil-erosion which has destroyed the productivity of nearly every Aegean island. The ancient monuments were carefully and lovingly restored. Local production was increased by the development of state-subsidized farms. Though the local Greeks suffered from expropriation and petty despotism, the island itself became extremely rich and beautiful. A handsome modern town sprang up outside the mediaeval walled town; and these labours were crowned by the building of a great hotel which even today must rank among the best in Europe.

The name of the Governor responsible for much of this labour was Mario Lago. His successor, who replaced him in 1936, managed within a comparatively short time to ruin more than half of the town by tasteless and vulgar restoration, and to exhaust the flourishing revenues of the island. Yet despite the handiwork of this parvenu (who was a close personal friend of Mussolini) the island today retains enough of its natural loveliness to delight the eye and mind of the traveller in

search of Mediterranean beauties; and more than its fair share of creature comforts to humour the exacting. Even the wartime invasion of the German and Italian armies—when the island became simply a cupboard for the hungry soldiery—did not completely ruin Rhodes. After a two-year interim spell of patient if often improvised work under the British Military Administration the Rhodians today feel confident that before long the normal life of the island will have recovered from the rigours and ravages of war. Much of the damage to buildings and monuments has been repaired. Deforestation has been halted. It remains to be seen whether the incoming Greek administration will be given the necessary budget to guarantee the upkeep of the island. The existing works and amenities of the town, however, make it the fourth or fifth town of Greece now that the Dodecanese are being incorporated into the Aegean group of islands.

A subject of frequent and admiring comment is the Rhodian character itself, which for gentleness, hospitality and moderation is a model that might profitably be followed by the rest of the Balkans. The metropolitan Greeks themselves have been amazed at the absence of party strife on the political plane, and at the high degree of public order and civic responsibility apparent in the behaviour of the islanders. Cynics have been apt to suggest that Italian rule was harsh enough to break the natural Greek ebullience of the native character; while politicians point out that the long divorce from metropolitan affairs has made the Rhodian ill-informed about home issues. In justice to Rhodes it should be pointed out that moderation and poise was a remarked characteristic of the ancient Rhodians; while on behalf of the modern one might with justice quote the opinion of Newton, that garrulous English archaeologist and consul whose *Travels and Discoveries in the Levant* makes an ideal companion for the modern traveller. In 1865 he was able to write: "The Rhodian peasant does not fatigue his guest with cumbrous hospitality as the Greek bourgeois does; he does not poison him with *raki*, clog him with sweetmeats, cram him with pilaff and sicken him with *narguilehs*. . . . I have generally found them thrifty, gentle and obliging in their intercourse with strangers and with one another, and far more truthful and honest than any Greeks I have ever had to deal with." It would be impossible to contest the truth of that judgment even today.

To the scholar Rhodes offers a variety of instruction; for the Hellenist, Kameiros (Homer's "golden Kameiros"), Lindos and



The courtyard of the Murad Reis mosque, with its delightful floor of black and white sea-pebbles executed by Greek peasants of Rhodes. Hascmet, exiled Turkish poet, was buried in its cemetery

Phileremo, for the student of Byzance the almost inaccessible churches of Funtocli and Alaerma, for the mediaevalist the incomparably rich material in Rhodes town, and in the frowning Crusader forts with which the long green coastline of Rhodes is studded—Pheraclea, dour Monolithos, Castello and Villanova. The abundance of material precludes any general view of the island to all who cannot spare six months of study: for the different periods overlap each other closely, and the historical events seem at first inextricably entangled. The student of church architecture will be able to study the mosques which rise from the foundations of Byzantine churches, or to read of the Ottoman sieges from the illuminated Arabic texts in the Turkish library. A bowshot from where

Demetrius of Macedonia launched in 304 B.C. the attack which gained him the appellation Poliorcetes ("Besieger")—the site was subsequently the Grand Master's garden, and after that the cemetery of the Murad Reis mosque—he will be able, in the cool deep shade of the courtyard, to speculate on the fate of the exiled satiric poet Hascmet, who lies buried there: for Rhodes was also a place of exile for the Turks as it had once been for the Romans.

Much good paper and ink have been employed by the historians in describing the famous Colossus of Rhodes; the curious traveller who attempts to find his way through the subject by visiting the excellent archaeological library of Rhodes may well be forgiven if he comes away with rather a



A 14th-century Turkish costume worn by a Rhodian beauty of today. The heavy black velvet ground is patterned with gold braid. Presumably a yashmak would originally have completed the ensemble

headache, for the subject has been one of violent controversy among specialists. Perhaps a brief summary of known facts, shorn of conjecture, would be of service to him. The Colossus was designed to commemorate the tremendous siege of antiquity when the Rhodians repulsed the forces of Demetrius Poliorcetes. It took twelve years to design and mount and it was finally thrown down by an earthquake which demolished Rhodes (c. 222 B.C.). The statue was about 105 feet in height. Its position is not known with any certainty, but the story that it "straddled the harbour" is a mediaeval concoction. No ancient authority makes this allegation. One of the most popular sites suggested is the present site of the tower of St Nicholas fronting Mandraccio harbour. After its fall the

great statue lay on the ground for some nine centuries. It was finally broken up by the Arabs in the 7th century A.D. and the metal carried off to Syria where it was put up to auction and knocked down to a Jew from Ur. The amount of the successful bid is unrecorded. It is recorded that several hundreds of camels were needed to load the scrap. Torr, by far the best historian who has written about Rhodes, is inclined to the idea that the Colossus occupied a site somewhere within the Deigma, the oriental bazaar with which Hippodamus beautified the ancient town. The field of conjecture is, however, open to everyone who dares to venture into it.

Nor will the student of folk-lore be disappointed, for the peasant-lore of Rhodes does not seem to have suffered from the exile



Emboniatisses wearing highland jack-boots and a costume found only in Embona, a Rhodian village at the foot of Mount Atabyron, famous both for its wine and its dancers

endured by the Dodecanese. Rather one might imagine that the long seclusion has caused the legends and proverbs of the Rhodians, as it were, to ferment—for solitude and separation quicken memory. Certain it is that whoever hunts for a continuity of culture between Rhodes and Greece will find not an element missing; the nereids, for example, which haunt the springs and waterfalls of Greece, also exist here in great abundance. Everywhere in the long verdant valleys behind Monte Smith one stumbles upon the daisy-starred glades which are their dancing-floors, and every village has some tale to tell about them. Once in Aphando, for example,

a shepherdess who had lately borne a child was walking up the hill to her fold when she fell in with a body of nereids. She began to run but they chased and easily overtook her. She was in mortal terror—and with good reason; for whoever gets dragged into a nereid's dance will not be allowed to stop until she falls dead from exhaustion. However, it so happened that the shepherdess was carrying on her back an embroidered mule-bag with some of the baby's swaddling clothes in it. This saved her, for when the nereids laid hands upon her they recoiled, screaming: "It burns, how it burns!"

Among the other tenacious peasant survivals which argue an ancient Greek origin is the modern Pan, who under the name of *kallikanzaros* makes life a misery for the housewife by his tricks no less in Rhodes than elsewhere in Greece. Here, however, he is often known as the Kaous, a word which seems to derive from the modern Greek verb meaning "to burn", and which conveys a pleasing evocation of brimstone and saltpetre. The Kaous is usually encountered at lonely crossroads, or late at night on dark footpaths. Everyone dreads such encounters, for the Kaous is as malicious as he is powerful. Usually he sneaks up behind you and asks hoarsely "Feathers or lead?" You must reply with the greatest circumspection. If you say "Feathers" you may escape, but if you say "Lead" he will leap on your back and throttle you, or ride you all over the landscape like a horse, thrashing you with a stick. In general there is nothing you can do about it; though

it is recorded that once a particularly wide-awake villager from Alaerma managed to catch a Kaous by its two pointed ears. Holding it thus he took it home and burnt a hole in its hairy leg with a red-hot iron. The Kaous shrieked and fainted, while out of the wound crawled a mass of small snakes which were killed one by one. This treatment proved beneficial, for the Kaous awoke towards morning healed from its insanity, and muttered: "Deeply, deeply I slept; and lightly, lightly I've woken."

Some idea of the continuity of myth and belief may be gathered from the story of Helen of Troy and the peasant legend which pre-

serves it to this day. According to one version Helen survived her husband and was driven from her home by her stepsons. It was in Rhodes that she took refuge, where, the story goes on, Polyxo found and hanged her from a tree to avenge himself for the loss of Tlepolemos during the Trojan War. History records a grove of trees at Lindos which were held sacred to "Helen Dendritis" and which preserved the memory of this beautiful and ill-fated woman as a tree goddess. But today Helen Dendritis has disappeared, together with her grove of trees. Instead the modern peasant tells the story of how once a great queen called Helen hung herself because she was unhappy. She hung herself from the tall branches of a pine, using a rainbow for a cord. And to this day the rainbow in some parts of the island is called "Helen's Cord"—surely a beautiful transition from one myth to another.

I have quoted these examples of folk-lore to indicate that despite its long separation from Greece, Rhodes may still fairly claim to be within the main current of Greek peasant culture. The songs and legends of the island have never been fully harvested though several industrious workers in this field have made a start, and the average traveller who knows a little modern Greek will have no difficulty in unearthing new ones. The stronghold of Greek lore and habit is undoubtedly the mountain village of Embona which lies at the foot of Mount Atabyron. Here the girls wear a distinctive dress which recalls Crete more than anything else, for their legs are cased in soft jack-boots which guard them against the dense and prickly scrub of their native highlands. On the slopes of the mountain which was once sacred to Taurine Zeus they farm their orchards and rocky holdings. The natives of Embona are celebrated for their dancing and no local fiesta is deemed complete unless a visiting body of *Emboniatisses*, as they are called, put in an appearance and dance the native dance known as the *sousta*. This is a sight not easily forgotten; for the traditional costume, with its violent colours, and the speed of the dance produce the most delightful kaleidoscopic effects, as of a great multi-coloured fan opening and shutting. Several villages of Rhodes are celebrated for their dancers, but Embona above any other; and the cry that goes up when the mountain dancers arrive at any lowland fiesta proves conclusively enough that the Rhodians willingly concede the highest honours to them. "The Embona girls have arrived," cry the peasants; "now we shall see some dancing."

The only other mountain of any size apart from Mount Atabyron is the easily accessible

and now rather domesticated Profeta. The modern road-system has made it so easy of access that here in spring one may wander for hours through the scented pine-glades, or lie upon a dazzling carpet of anemones and peonies. But its peculiar atmosphere has already been recorded in the beautiful poem of Mr Sacheverell Sitwell which the curious reader will stumble upon in *Canons of Giant Art*. The evocation of Profeta and its goddess is far more complete and moving than it could ever be in prose:

It was her sacred mountain, in the heart of mist,
A wood of wild rocks where every echo called,
Where words bent back at you as soon as spoken
From rocks like houses or like sudden islands;
Here stags wandered, . . .

Indeed the stags still wander on Profeta, though their numbers have been sadly depleted by the Germans and by neglect during the war years.

These notes have hinted at the enjoyment that Rhodes offers to the scholar and to the student of folk-lore. Another kind of traveller will no doubt be as interested in the wild flowers which star the green slopes of the hills in spring—the sheets of narcissus and anemone; he will prefer to see contemporary Rhodes, with the whitewashed villages whose orchards and gardens are everywhere stabbed with the scarlet dots of the hibiscus. It is for him that we should record the existence of nearly a hundred different varieties of orchid, and of a rare black peony which may be seen occasionally on the topmost slopes of Monte Profeta. And it is for him also that we should record the existence of a spring at Salaco whose waters exercise a magnetic charm over the wayfarers who quench their thirst at it. The legend says that whoever drinks at Salaco is bound to return to Rhodes, marry a Rhodian girl and spend his life in the island.

Sea-communication with Alexandria and Beirut has already been restored; a regular air-service from Athens was opened in June of this year. Rhodes, then, is going to be easily accessible both from Egypt and from metropolitan Greece. There could be no lovelier place to spend the cool Mediterranean spring, or the parched and sunny August weather which ushers in the Day of St Demetrius, upon which the casks of village wine are broached according to custom. The Emperor Tiberius, whose judgment in so many things was at fault, never hesitated when it came to the choice of Rhodes as a place of exile. The contemporary traveller will have no difficulty in endorsing his judgment when he visits this paragon among the islands of the Levant.

Between Seasons in the Midi

by WILLIAM SANSOM

It was depressing to pass through an Avignon sodden with rain under low grey cloud, thence to follow the coast railway over Provençal mud as brown as would be a Van Gogh with its yellows darkened by the weather of future centuries—and to see the ochre Riviera villas dripping, the palms dripping, the red rocks sodden against a wide grey Mediterranean. But elevating to wake up at Nice the next morning to a blue postcard sky and a sun warm as the deep rose façades of the Place Masséna. That is the November and March weather—one day grey as a wet pigeon, the next peacock bright as an illuminated souvenir.

So once more the warm blue Baie des Anges, the wedding-cake hotels curving round the Promenade des Anglais, the warm shuttered villas behind in their gardens of palm and cactus, the rattling southern trams, the plane-shaded boulevards, the fabulous shop-windows of this seventh town of France. Good indeed to stretch one's legs and nod one's head: "So it's all still here. All three parts . . . the elegant parade of hotels and holiday, the warm residential town behind, the narrow-streeted cluster of the old Italian quarter that forms the nucleus of all this spread around." Good: but bad in a few hours to realize the truth—that in fact it is only *half* there.

For although the buildings still stand and the palms invite, there is no more than a half-life lived among them. The reason is the familiar one—the rise in prices, the devaluation of money. Everywhere is half-empty. People spend much time at home behind the economical shutters, excuse themselves from taking an *apéritif* with you because they cannot give one back. These symptoms, together with the threadbare *rentier* and the new reposeless faces of the white-roadstered *marché noir*, are familiar. But it was on the Promenade, among the deck-chairs (full, because they cost no more than two francs a sit), that I saw the final symptom of the times, the purest thermometer reading of the economic weather, one that I cannot forget. A beggar approached a man sitting near me and asked for money. The man fumbled his loose change, handed the beggar a two-franc piece. This the beggar took; but then regarded it for some moments sadly, and finally with a most gracious air handed it back—inviting the unhappy benefactor to take his lady out to supper. Nor was

this an isolated eccentricity. The same thing happened to me some days later; and with a glorious five-franc piece, too.

Along the *corniche* east to the miniature principality of Monaco; a serpentine journey past many bright blue bays and villa-diced promontories, with a yard to one's left the wall of cactus-patched pale rock rising high to the cold air of such mediaeval mountain villages as Èze—then to cross the guardless border through a tunnel emerging into a sudden land of railway yards and a great beer factory backed by Monte Carlo and the immense Monégasque fortress. (Such a journey may be made in one of the streamlined modern motor-liners, perfectly comfortable and efficient and new, which move like eccentric queen-ants among the heterogeneity of patched-up lorries and bastard army vehicles that constitute, with a few bright black-market beetles, the insect stream of traffic crawling those *corniche* roads.)

That startling beer factory and stretch of railway yards makes up most of Monaco's industrial quarter—if you except the Casino—and is packed in by the rock; though at one point in the harbour a nice little gasometer may be seen through the rigging and masts of a moored, most aristocratic luxury yacht. These evidences may at first sound trivial compared with the more apparent scenic grandeurs—but they imply very much the nature of Monaco's characteristic pride and wish, which is to remain enclosed and independent. Of course, the state is economically joined to France . . . but consistently such minor evidences assert themselves—the gasworks, the pillar-boxes painted white and not French blue, the stamps, the slightly reduced taxes, the Dutch cleanliness and order of roads and public gardens, patriotic notices such as "*Aux Limonadiers de Monaco!*" and many another more subtle than the Casino atmosphere itself. The Casino, it is well known, is the reason for Monaco's old prosperity and for the fantastic assembly of strangely tiled villas spangling the *fin-de-siècle* terraces of Monte Carlo. But the Monégasque himself just tolerates this gold-mine, his pride is in independence. It can be felt, in the cafés, in the music of the municipal band, along the neat orange-treed streets of Monacoville. A material illusion, in spirit it is strong. Up on the citadel itself, with its rows of cannon still trained fiercely over the blue sea, with its

Palace and its Prince and its gay-uniformed guards in their striped sentry-boxes—there I felt an impregnable air of nostalgia, as though the seven years had never been, nor even the twenty-five years before.

However—in Monaco too, as in Nice and all along the coast, the first odd conversation introduced that monotonous topic: “Prices, prices—how is one to live?” It is sad indeed that a people noted for their conversational charm should now be limited to two topics only—that of prices and that of communism-versus-republicanism. The latter is stripped of all doctrine, becomes simply a wrangle between those who ‘have’—even if they have only a half-share in a poor shop in the poorest quarter—and those who ‘have not’. In fact, between the proprietor and the worker who is hired. The money topic is a dirge without much hope, so that most people live from month to month without a palpable vision of the future, paradoxically obsessed with the daily need to obtain as much as possible of a money they consider worthless.

Nevertheless the southern spirit cannot fail to erupt. One suspects that it erupts only sporadically, half the time only. But every so often that old warm gaiety prevails. Two labourers, not drunk, singing to each other in full voice operatic excerpts in an empty Monégasque bar at tea-time; girls going to a dance with carnations in their black hair; Sunday families strolling up to the château at Nice and remarking on the beautiful day (remarkable that they remain conscious of and grateful for their almost perpetual sunshine); a middle-aged woman of respectable appearance in a Marseilles ‘C’ class bar drinking twenty glasses of absinthe straight off for a bet, shaking hands, and leaving as steadily as she entered. Incidentally, absinthe and Pernod are forbidden by an unrescinded Vichy law; but they remain the favoured drink of the Bouches-du-Rhône area and their home-brewed equivalent *pastis* is drunk liberally, openly and cheaply at the counters of many bars, though never on the open street.

Of shell and bomb damage there is really very little on the coast between Monaco and Marseilles, though there is more inland—at Arles for instance. But at Marseilles the immaculate Boche dynamiting of the old port buildings leaves an unsavoury wasteland in this very huddled, hilly, busy town. Marseilles is the busiest European town I have ever known. A town that is the premier of all the rattling French ports; that provides as its eminences a giant funicular dwarfing the hill-top church to which it leads, and secondly a railway station jezebelled with a giant approach staircase larger than the station and

capable of taking abreast a whole company of *chasseurs alpins*; a town of hilly streets cobbled and wide, up and down which roar with southern *panache* the heavy, straining port lorries. A hot town, but bristling with energy; commercial and crying its wares, a town of surreal hideous shape but of great congenial warmth.

For beauty—and I suppose we the perfidious seek it from the South more than ‘conditions’ and as much even as the sun—there is Arles. Linger with the *tutti-frutti* of Nice, be dazzled by Monte Carlo, be angry at Antibes spoiled by *chi-chi*, primp yourself at Cannes, relax at the little Lavandous and Canadels and Bandols . . . but go to Arles for content. Alas, the quarter by the river has been hit hard by the war; much there is shattered, but the rest remains. Sitting on the Boulevard des Lices in the Café Wauxhall [*sic*]; knowing that behind you lies an intricate stone town of narrow charming streets, of grimly magnificent 18th-century mansions, of such a squatly lovely early Christian edifice as the leaden-stone church of St Trophime; feeling the exquisite sense of coolness that stone gives in the shadow of the noon-day sun; knowing that this is the heart of a sunny country of long village *tambours* and Sancho Panza trousers, of good fowl and fine full wine; conscious of the ubiquitous Roman ruins and knowing that on these firm ancient foundations there still exists today a good life, the lazy leathern life of France tinged with Spain. For here, though it is absorbed by France, there is already a smell of Spain, both in the peasant’s and farmer’s daily dress of black hat, black short waistcoat and thin, splay-ended corduroy trousers and in a certain dark stolidity. This is opposed to the other two ingredients to be sensed along the midi coast—the Tunisian and otherwise African mixture that strikes round Marseilles and Toulon, and the Italian *coloratura* creeping along over Mentone and Nice from Ventimiglia.

Finally, though passing through an unhappy period, Southern France may be visited not any more for the princely luxury the old exchange rates afforded, but simply for love of France. Now what is that? Not so much, I believe, any extraordinary sense of logic in the Frenchman, nor any unusual frivolity in the Frenchwoman. But, whether you can afford it or not, the *sense* of good living, the attitude of seriousness without earnestness, the truth that France is richly fertile and sees to it, whichever way the politics are blowing, that the mud is green. Civilized they are, because they remain by the earth, an earth of succulent yield.

Children of Mexico

by RODNEY GALLOP

THOSE fortunate enough to have travelled widely in Mexico, crossing its arid uplands and remote sierras, or dropping down into its green valley floors, preserve a mosaic of memories made up of places and people. Among those memories, at least in my own case, a special corner is set apart for the children of Mexico, especially those of Indian or mainly Indian blood.

That little boy, a ragged sombrero framing his seraphic, smiling face like a halo, who springs up from nowhere to keep an eye on your car in the hope of earning a copper or two; those coy, grave-faced little girls, miniatures of their mothers down to the last detail of costume, who are so tongue-tied with the peculiar brand of bashfulness that is called

There is nothing of the "sad Indian" in the little daughter of an Otomi witch-doctor as she poses beside a plait of maize-husks, part of her father's magic stock-in-trade

y Gallop



vergüenza; the babies whose eyes of polished obsidian follow you with superior interest from the *rebozo* shawl which lashes them securely to their mother's back: all these have a quality of shy and enchanting innocence that recalls the poems of our own Thomas Traherne.

How different all this is from Spain. Here the children, with their derision and insults, sometimes even with their stones, can be a source of misery to the foreign traveller. The contrast was noted by the Spanish friar, Father Motolinia, not long after the conquest of Mexico. "So docile and gentle are they", he wrote of the children of Mexico, "that ten Spanish children make more noise than a thousand Indians." Four centuries later, five hundred Spanish children, advance guard of those refugees from the peninsular civil war to whom Mexico extended such warm-hearted hospitality, made an impact on Morelia which that quiet Mexican city will not easily forget.

Among the children whom I especially remember was Agustín Ríos, the boy who attached himself to us at Tepoztlán and diffidently unfolded to us the lore and legend of this ancient Aztec *pueblo*. Another was Félix, the 'maid of all work' at a tiny inn in the Sierra de Puebla. Félix did the limited work required by the inn's bare boards and scanty furniture, served in the grocer's shop next door, and yet was always ready to welcome us with a smile which split his moonlike face like an over-ripe calabash.

Not far away was a village of Otomi Indians, among whom, under the name of *brujería* or witchcraft, the pre-Christian agricultural cults of primitive Mexico were preserved in all their purity. It took us both time and tact to penetrate these secrets and win the confidence of the witch-doctors. One of these specialized in cutting out human figures in coloured paper, which are used in ceremonies to promote the growth of the crops. His little daughter, wearing the embroidered blouse of her people, and with her hair flowing long and free, overcame

her shyness enough to smile into my camera, as she posed for her photograph beside her father's ritual plait of maize-husks.

Clearest of all, naturally, are my memories of my own Indian god-children. How I acquired them is a story in itself. All who saw the beautifully photographed Mexican film *Portrait of Maria* will remember its setting, the islands and waterways of Xochimilco. Here, long before Cortés conquered their country, the Indians dwelling on the lava flow of the volcanoes which rim the Valley of Mexico reclaimed land from the great lake of Tenochtitlan in an unusual way. First they made rafts of woven reeds and mud and anchored them to the shallow floor of the lake. Gradually these rafts grew more firmly to the bottom, to become the *chinampas* or 'floating gardens' of today, where, in surroundings of idyllic beauty, grow fruit, flowers and that staple of Mexican life, Indian corn.

Nowadays Xochimilco is invaded by tourists, but Mixquic, further out from Mexico City, still carries on the old life, unspoilt. Here live the Garcia family, linked to me by the ties of god-fatherhood, which, in Mexican eyes, are as close as those of blood. We first encountered them one Sunday when we were out for the day, and they offered to paddle us in their punt to their own particular floating garden. They consisted of Lucas Garcia, his wife Leonora and their five daughters aged from twelve to two. Their names were Benita, Maria Luisa, Loreto, Ventura and Hypolita.

All had the measured movements, the quiet voices and the instinctive good manners of the Indian. Lucas stood in the prow and paddled. The others sat in the punt with my own children and made chains of water-lilies or pulled as we passed at the mauve hyacinth blossoms of the *huachinango* lily. Under a clear blue sky, the snows of Popocatepetl were reflected in the broad waterways lined by tall green poplars. It made an unforgettable picture, and we returned many times to visit these kindly and hospitable people.

Measured in terms of worldly wealth, the Garcias were very poor. They lived in two ramshackle huts. One, entered by a door, was the bedroom where they all slept on mats of plaited cane. The other, with one whole side open to the air, was the living-room.



Rodney Ga

Loreto Garcia, the oldest of the author's four Aztec god-children. The Garcia family lived by tilling one of the floating gardens on the edge of the lake of Tenochtitlan

Here, a fire burned in the middle of the bare earthen floor, and Leonora bent over the *metate* stone grinding out the maize, and grilling *tortilla* cakes of unleavened dough or small fish caught in the lake. Poor as they were, they knew no discontent. They had the sun, water from the lake and the ancient pattern of life handed down by their Aztec fathers.

One day, when we had not been out to see them for some months, we found an addition to the family, a boy this time, after the five girls. They were very proud of him. I asked his name and when he was to be christened. He was called Adam, they said, but, as for the christening, that would cost three pesos which were not easily come by. I reflected a few moments. Then an idea struck me.

Would they, I asked diffidently, allow me to pay for the christening and to be the baby's godfather? There was some hesitation, though not from any religious difficulty. It transpired that for the same economic reason none of the three younger girls had been christened. This difficulty was easily straightened out, however. In for a penny, in for a pound: and a pound, in point of fact, would have been enough to make all six my godchildren if this had been necessary.

So, a few weeks later, we had a quadruple christening at Mixquic. We brought a long christening robe for Adam and white silk dresses for the little girls who went shod for the first time in their lives, thanks to the white shoes and socks which we also brought. Looking at their own reflections in the still lake waters, they were as lost in self-admiration as ever was Narcissus. When all was ready, we drove to the church in a car. The priest was waiting, and in the dark interior I felt the increasing weight of my godchildren as I lifted each in turn and held them while the priest baptized them with water, oil and salt, and the sacristan mumbled the Latin responses. Outside in the sun-drenched churchyard I was assailed by hordes of children with the customary cry of "*Bolo, padrinito*" (an obol, little godfather). They were appeased with the traditional shower of coppers, and we returned to the Garcias' home for a simple christening feast.

I have often looked back on that day and reflected how short-lived was its happiness. By the time war broke out I had left Mexico, but already Lucas, my *compadre*, was dead, of some intestinal infection from the waters of the lake. More than Leonora, Lucas had been the linchpin of the family, and the passing years brought me news of its break-up. Leonora found a new husband while most of the children went to live with their grandfather. Adam was the next to go, a victim of that infant mortality which is one of Mexico's most tragic problems. As they grew up, Benita and Maria Luisa found work on the outskirts of Mexico City, and I have just received an unconfirmed report, which I hope may not prove to be true, that the two older of my three goddaughters have died. Young lives are easily snuffed out in Mexico where the pathetic transience of all mortal things lies never more than half concealed below the surface of everyday life.

Health and education are the two great problems which must be solved if Mexico's children are to have even such little security as life on this planet allows. The Mexican Government is making great and heroic

efforts to solve them. John Steinbeck's beautiful and poignant film *The Forgotten Village* lifted a corner of the curtain on the superstition and prejudice which must still be overcome in the remoter parts of the country if disease is to be stamped out and infant mortality reduced. Once I remember hearing an old man tell how one of the government's sanitary flying-squads had converted him from witch-doctoring to injections as a cure for what he was still pleased to call "evil vapours". With that knowledge his grandchildren will grow up from birth, and in ever-widening ripples it will spread throughout the country.

In the same way, in some of the remotest Indian villages, I met devoted school teachers who were sacrificing all the amenities of life to bring the rudiments of education to children whose parents could neither read nor write. More recently, the Mexican Government have introduced a remarkable innovation, a scheme by which each person who can read and write undertakes to teach these arts to at least one illiterate. The scheme is having remarkable success, and the Ministry of Education's manual *Saber Leer* ("Knowing How to Read") may be seen today in the hands of many to whom, a few years ago, it would have been, literally, a closed book.

It takes both time and trouble to make contact with Indian life and thought off the beaten track in Mexico. But there is one fiesta, easily accessible to the visitor, which is a gaily coloured pageant of Mexican childhood. It is held annually in the very heart of Mexico City on the day of Corpus Christi. Its scene is the Zócalo, the great square which was the centre of Montezuma's capital. Where his court once held sway, there now runs the long low palace of the colonial Viceroys and of the Presidents of today. At right angles to it, the Cathedral stands on what was once the site of the principal pyramid where so many sacrificial victims were done to death.

Did the Aztec peasantry once bring offerings of flowers and fruit to lay before old gods during the first rains? And did the little handful of Spanish missionaries, faced with the task of converting a whole nation, sanctify this tradition by giving it a Christian occasion and meaning? It seems infinitely probable. However this may be, the fact remains that on this one day in the year a special mass and procession within the precincts of the Cathedral are held for the children of Mexico City who attend it, not in their city finery, but dressed as little Indians and bearing symbolic offerings.



That little boy, a ragged sombrero framing his seraphic, smiling face like a halo . . .” Mexican children, boys as well as girls, have a quality of shy and enchanting innocence that recalls the poems of our Traherne





In Mexico City the children have their own fiesta on the day of Corpus Christi. A special service is held in the Cathedral, to which they come dressed in native Indian costume, bringing symbolic offerings. Afterwards, like bright coloured blossoms, they cluster round the steps. The girls carry baskets, the boys huacales, carriers laden with miniature reproductions of Indian utensils



This little girl has the classic features of the Zapotec Indian from the southern State of Oaxaca. She wears the blue rebozo head-cloth in a special style, plaited into her hair and falling gracefully down her back.



"Grave-faced little girls, miniatures of their mothers down to the last detail of costume." The elder sister wears the straight-cut chincuate skirt, a woven belt and the rodete, a pre-Spanish headdress of plaited wool



The basis of the china poblana costume, dating back to a 17th-century legend, is an embroidered white bodice and a sequined skirt of red and green. The variant here shown displays the eagle and serpent emblem of Mexico.



The charro and china poblana costumes have come to be regarded as the 'national' dress of Mexico. The charro or horseman wears an embroidered jacket and trousers, and has a gaily coloured sarape flung over one shoulder



Endless patience and ingenuity are displayed in the native toys of Mexico, a variety of which are put on sale on Corpus Christi day : for example rows of many-coloured horsemen, made of plaited straw and sold for a song

My first Corpus Christi in Mexico was spent in the hot country of Vera Cruz, so it was not until I had already been nearly two years in the country and explored it widely that I witnessed this particular festival. Unfortunately I could not devote the whole morning to it, and by noon the mass and procession were over. The children were standing and sitting about in little groups, surrounded by admiring relatives and friends, and as much the centre of attention as any bride on her wedding day. Their gay colours struck a fresh and contrasting note beside the yellow trams which clanged their way round the Zócalo. It was a miniature panorama of all the most picturesque features of Indian life and costume.

The little boys mostly wore *cotones*, the pyjama suits of white cotton which are the traditional Indian wear and carried, slung from their shoulders, *ayate* carrying-bags woven from the spun fibre of maguey aloe. Their heads were crowned with wide-brimmed sombreros, and on his back each bore a *huacal*, the crate-shaped wooden carrier in which the Indians carry their loads, taking the weight not from the shoulder but from the forehead with the aid of a tump-line.

Male costume differs little throughout the country, but the dresses of the little girls were more varied. Some were from the lakes and volcanoes of Michoacan; others from Jalisco or Guerrero; others again from Oaxaca. The costumes of Indian women, however, all have one thing in common. They are based on rectangles of material. In that advanced but curiously unbalanced stage of civilization which the people of the Americas had reached when the Spaniards came, when, for instance, they had discovered neither the wheel nor the domestication of animals or birds, it had never occurred to their women to weave or tailor material on the bias. So the *chincuete* skirt does not narrow at the waist; the *huipil* of the South is just an inverted sack with arm and neck-holes; and the more ingenious *quex-quemiltl* consists of two long rectangular strips of cloth, the end of each sewn to the side of the other to form a little embroidered cape. All these garments the children wore, with the finery traditionally associated with them; ear-rings of tinsel or filigree or carved and painted wooden plaques imitating the lacquered dishes of Uruapan.

Some of the children, both boys and girls, were dressed in what has come to be considered the 'national' Mexican dress of *charro* and *china poblana*. The name *charro* originally meant an inhabitant of Spanish Salamanca, but the people of this region are great horse-

men, and in Mexico it has come to mean a horseman pure and simple. The Mexican *charro* wears a broad sombrero of felt or cloth, a riding-jacket or embroidered shirt and long skin-tight trousers. All this is adorned with silver or braid. The literal meaning of *china poblana* is a Chinese woman from Puebla, about a hundred miles from Mexico City. It is something of a misnomer but goes back to Sor Catarina de San Juan, an Indian (not Chinese) princess of the 17th century who was carried off by pirates to Cochin, baptized into the Christian faith by the Portuguese, bought in the slave-market in the Philippines by the Viceroy of Mexico, and finally adopted by a childless couple in Puebla, after whose death she attained semi-sanctity by her good works. It is uncertain whether it was really Sor Catarina who brought to Puebla the costume associated with her name, but there is an oriental hint in the silk or bead embroidery with which the low-cut white blouse is adorned and in the brightly spangled red-and-green skirt.

Since this is so especially a children's festival, it is only natural that toys should not be left out of it. There is even one traditional toy particularly associated with the day. These are mules, made of maize-leaf or reeds or more recently wood, stuck with flowers, and bearing miniature loads. Outside the Cathedral they are set out for sale in those serried rows in which the Indians delight to expose their wares.

Much could be written of the miniature toys made all over Mexico. If one looks closely at the crates which the little boys carry at the Corpus Christi, they will be seen to be hung with diminutive reproductions of the everyday domestic utensils of the Indian: the basket, the water-jar, the rug of reeds or wool, the familiar eating-bowl and the drinking-jug shaped by the still wheelless potter. These are, in fact, the toys which the Indians fashion with loving care for their own children whose play is always based on the realities of life, never on purposeless whimsy or escapism.

Looking back after some years on the children's Corpus Christi festival, it seems to me to resume and reflect not only child life throughout the Republic, but, implicitly if not explicitly, every facet of Mexican experience: the country's past and its present, its joys and its sorrows, its struggles and its achievements, its beauty and the price at which beauty so often must be bought. It will, I hope, be a long time before the all-pervading drabness of modern industrial life extinguishes the light and colour which Mexico's children display on this their own special day in the year.

The Japanese Peasant: A Recruit for Democracy?

Notes and Photographs by DERRICK WOOLLACOTT

Speaking to foreign correspondents in Japan last March 17, General MacArthur stated: "Democracy is, I believe, here to stay". Yet in the election of prefectural governors and heads of towns and villages held throughout Japan on April 5, conservative candidates defeated their rivals and 33 former governors were returned in the 46 prefectures. This decisive indication of a tendency to cling to the past may well raise doubts as to whether Japanese soil is, in fact, fertile breeding-ground for the seeds of democracy. Let us consider the case of the man who lives closest to the soil, the peasant. Although only one-fifth of Japan's 80,000,000 people are engaged solely in agriculture, the importance of the farmer has increased out of all proportion to his numerical strength—for various reasons which will be developed in the following notes





A soldier returns to work, with a primitive plough, on the paternal fields. The Japanese farmer is undoubtedly one of the steadiest workers in the world; he must be so, having long had to support himself and all his relations on his minute portion of the total, small and incredibly overcrowded cultivable area of Japan



Japanese grain culture is very intensive and productive per unit of area, and fertilizers are scientifically applied; but being conducted in small plots it does not lend itself to the use of machinery. This is specially true of rice cultivation in dyked, irrigated fields, which occupies well over half the arable acreage



All hands are called on to help with the harvesting. The Japanese farmer was relatively undisturbed by war and defeat; but many did not return. Those left must toil harder than ever; for with no elbow-room (more than three-quarters of the country's surface is mountainous) and relying mainly on hand-made implements, which have hitherto sufficed to maintain him and his community, the farmer has now to meet the increased demands of the great, ever-hungry cities

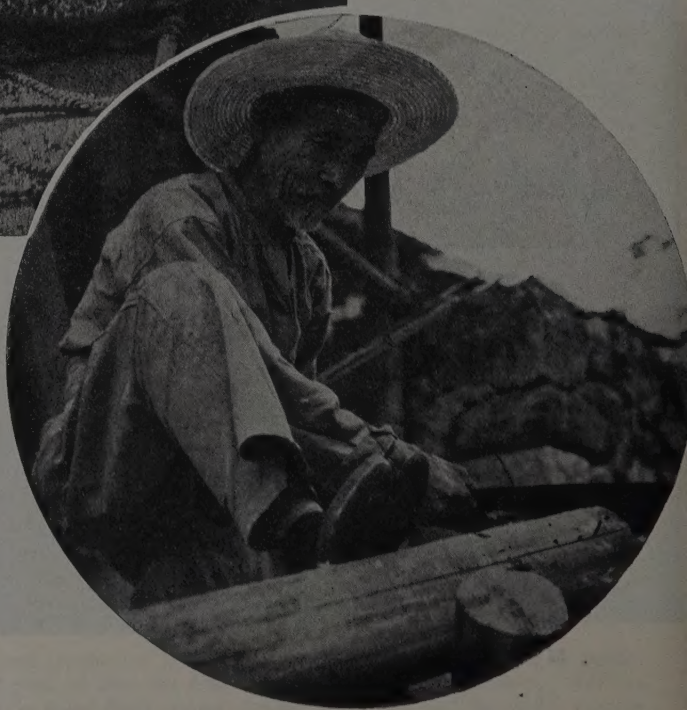
A village-made machine lightens the tedious labour of threshing by hand. Not only do the village communities of Japan support themselves in respect of food; the versatile inhabitants can provide for many other essential wants. The farmer himself furnishes raw material for straw rope, straw sandals (waraji), and huge brown straw 'waterproof' cloaks and umbrella hats: while the power for wooden trip hammers to pound his grain is obtained from mountain streams





Fishing is an important secondary occupation during the summer months. Eel (considered a great delicacy), trout and a variety of carp abound in rivers and hillside lakes. The Japanese village is usually built beside water, for domestic as well as agricultural purposes; and whenever their constant round of duties permits, members of each family take time off to go fishing. A large proportion of the catch is dried, salted and laid by to eke out their winter stores

The village carpenter can usually supply such tools and utensils as the peasant needs. Each community is a closely knit, self-sufficient unit, to which few machine-made products are necessary. Small wonder, therefore, that the peasants evince little interest in attempts to democratize a government which has so slight an influence on the independent course of their daily lives. Besides, like farmers in other lands, they incline to conservatism and resent innovation



Various cottage industries have developed in most villages, not only to fill local requirements but also to provide a small surplus for the purchase of such 'luxuries' as town-made clothing. Weaving and the making of parasols, fans, baskets and pottery are some of the more important home crafts, most of the raw material for these being obtained locally. Every cottage has its own indispensable bamboo grove, from which comes the wood for many articles in daily use



Silk-making is, however, by far the most important home industry and one which it would seem possible to develop for export in order to help pay for essential imports. In the 1930's Japan provided nearly half the world crop of commercial silk, much of it coming from individual farmers. But increased production can only be promoted if the over-worked peasant is offered sufficient inducement, in return for greater efforts, in the form of low-cost manufactured goods



General MacArthur, having issued a warning that Japan is "so lacking in indigenous materials that she must trade or starve", has stated that her exports should be built up sufficiently to permit the purchase of at least 15 per cent of her food abroad. Before the war about the same percentage came from outside the homeland but Japan was able to import large supplies from her overseas territories, turning to Canada and Australia for wheat. Today, lacking such outside help, she nevertheless has to feed an extra 5,000,000 mouths sent back from former possessions to the homeland. Thus the peasant farmer's status in the national economy has been enormously enhanced.

With the reopening of private trade between Japan and the outside world as from August 15, demands on the farmer for greater production will doubtless have been increased. Any surplus obtainable from his fields will be required to feed the factory worker, thereby promoting a flow of manufactured goods for export in return for larger supplies of food and direly needed imports. The cottage crafts could also provide material for the export trade; especially silk-making, even in the face of competition from artificial silk. But the

peasant's answer to all pleas for larger surpluses will probably be that his small plot is already worked so intensively that no more can be squeezed from it; and that so much time is needed to extract this maximum from the soil that he has none to spare for developing home industries.

What can bring a more positive response? What can induce in the villager a desire for those changes, both economic and political, which would enable him to contribute actively to the democratic cause, when his unceasing labours, self-sufficiency and conservatism make him practically impervious to the impact of fresh influences; and when he has, moreover, been the chief target of the continuous propaganda poured out by Japanese leaders for three-quarters of a century, with the result that he has been described as "the main repository of the national myths which have led Japan astray"? Appeals to the older generation seem unlikely to bear much fruit. But the standard of peasant literacy is high; and the same educational channels which contributed to the effectiveness of former propaganda may yet be employed to penetrate, through the schools and the younger generation, into the life of the Japanese peasant.